C.H.I.L.L. – A GROWER-FOCUSED PROTOCOL USED FOR EARLIER DETECTION OF DISEASE CHALLENGES.

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Most commercially integrated poultry companies depend heavily on technical servicemen/women along with company veterinarians to detect and manage health concerns as they arise. Unfortunately, neither service providers nor company veterinarians have the time or resources to monitor individual flocks on a daily basis. In an attempt to assist poultry companies in detecting early signs of disease, a protocol referred to as C.H.I.L.L. (Chest, Hips, Intestines, Legs, Livability) was developed that helps growers differentiate between normal and abnormal body condition. This protocol was refined and evaluated in collaboration with the technical service team of a US based, small-bird integrator over the past 12 months. With minimal instruction, growers were able to evaluate *Chest* (keel curvature and air sacs), *Hips* (femoral head lesions), *Intestines* (intestinal contents and thickness), *Legs* (tibiotarsal bone), and *Livability* (seven-day mortality). When abnormalities were observed, growers reported findings to their technical service provider. Improvements were seen in areas of livability, feed conversion, and body weight when compared to the previous year’s performances.